

Not Knowing What It Was by **27vampyresinhermind**

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Summary: "We were just kids when we fell in love." Just a little fluffy Mileven one-shot inspired by Ed Sheeran's song "Perfect" spanning some special moments in the years following the events of season 2. Rated M just to be on the safe side because, you remember me right? Okay then. Hope you enjoy!

Not Knowing What It Was

A/N: Well hello again my loves. At this point, has anybody not seen Stranger Things? I've absolutely fallen in love with this show, the characters, the actors/actresses, and high holy shit the SHIPS! Honestly, Mileven owns me so there's no point trying to convince me otherwise. And why would you? They're perfect. Which brings me to exactly how this fic came about. Driving to work one morning, Ed Sheeran's "Perfect" came on the radio and the line "we were just kids when we fell in love, not knowing what it was" just screamed Mileven at me. It doesn't help that Ed already has my soul in his hands and Mileven has my heart so BOOM, this happened. The song inspired this story and its title. Fair warning to anyone suffering from lactose-intolerance because this one-shot is cheesy as hell. Cavity inducing fluff is always a risk you must be willing to take with me. I've been reading some ST stories recently and I have to say that I feel I'm in good company. There are some really impressive authors in this fandom so it feels like home again. I hope everyone enjoys the story, points to the person who catches the Old Gregg reference that somehow made it in (damn you Noel Fielding), and NO SHOCKER HERE, I still love getting reviews. I own nothing except my ideas, and according the Original Thought Theory, someone else probably had it first. Here's hoping I do Mileven the justice they deserve, and the enjoyment you as the reader deserves. Thank you to everyone still reading the things my brain puts out into the universe. You guys have always been the best. Meagan (musicconsumes)

"Dad, what is love?"

Generally, Hopper got a little pleasant chill whenever the kid called him 'dad'. But when she followed it up with that loaded question, the chill turned a bit frosty.

"Um, well, you see kid, I love you. For us, that means, well it means I take care of you and I protect you. And, you know, I would do anything in my power to make sure that you're happy and safe. Does that answer your question?"

He'd felt mildly confident in his jumbled mess of an answer until El simply rolled her eyes on the couch beside him.

"I know about how a family loves each other. You and I love each other in the same way Joyce, Will, and Jonathan do. But that's not the only kind of love there is, right?"

Jim Hopper knew the second that Wheeler kid had punched him that he should've been preparing for this talk. Given Jane's emotionally stunted laboratory upbringing, he figured he'd have a little more time before these types of questions started popping out of her mouth.

When a few minutes had passed and Hopper was still running through scenarios in his brain, he decided to teach her with the same technique that had worked so far. It was time for the dictionary.

"Why don't we—"

"I already looked it up. It means 'an intense feeling of deep affection'." She was proud of herself for remembering the exact definition the dictionary had given. "But I don't know how to tell when you're" —she paused, recalling the words the lady had said on the TV soap opera —"*in love* with a person."

Hopper deflated. Sinking back down on the couch, he took a deep breath in effort to keep his blood pressure at a manageable level.

"I need Joyce for this shit," he muttered. Jane had no trouble hearing him though and immediately jumped up, making a beeline for the phone.

"I can call her," the kid offered helpfully. Hopper's eyes went wide at the idea of asking Joyce to explain love to his kid. Last thing he wanted was Joyce Byers thinking he couldn't handle something so *parental*. She'd be at the cabin in a flurry of leaves and gravel in two seconds flat, eager to help with anything he needed. The woman had two boys of her own to worry about. He didn't want Jane adding to the worry mixture if he could help it.

"No," Jim sighed, "you don't need to call Joyce. Sit back down." She did as she was told, a fact which made Jim groan internally. He'd

been counting on her teenage surliness to maybe pick a fight over not getting to use the phone or something. Instead, the kid picked this moment to be the obedient daughter.

"So how can you tell if you're in love with someone?" Her repeating the question in such a matter-of-fact tone did nothing to assuage Jim's nerves.

"It's different for everybody but, I guess, when two people are in love, they want to be around each other all the time. They get butterflies in their stomach when they think of the other person." Anticipating her confusion, Hopper quickly added, "not real butterflies, like a tingling feeling in your stomach." Jane nodded at his clarification so he continued. "When two people are in love, they might hold hands or kiss, they go on dates where it's just the two of them hanging out together. And just, they want to be together for as long as possible."

He waited as Jane seemed to mull over the information in her head. Knowing her, she was going over every word he'd said, making absolutely positive that she'd understood it all. Pretty soon, Hopper started doing the same thing, making sure he hadn't said anything that could be misconstrued in any way at all.

"Okay then, thank you."

Jim stared in complete confusion as Jane just leaned back on the cushions as though she hadn't just fried his brain with her questions about being in love.

"That's it," he sputtered, "*thank you*? Kid, you can't ask that type of question and then just go back to normal like nothing happened. Why did you ask me about love in the first place?" Jane shrugged and, without even turning away from the TV, said,

"Oh, I'm in love with Mike."

Jim Hopper felt like the earth fell out from under him in the time it took her to say that one small phrase.

"Wait a second, you what?"

Hopper paced in front of the television set causing Jane to bob back

and forth in order to see the TV.

"I'm in love with Mike. Now can you please sit back down? I can't see the TV." Hopper did sit back down but only because his legs were feeling shaky.

"Kid, turn the TV off a second." She ticked her head to the side, using her powers to flip the TV's dial until the screen went black.

"Are you okay dad?"

Hopper took deep breaths, knowing his blood pressure was through the roof.

"You can't be in love Jane. You're too young." He put as much force into his voice as he could without yelling. She didn't like it when he yelled.

"I'm fourteen," she stated plainly, as if that solved all of his problems.

"That's too young to be in love. You don't even know what it means to be in love." Hopper scrubbed a hand over his face but it didn't scrub out the idea of his child thinking she was in love with the Wheeler kid.

"But you just told me what it means to be in love." Again, the level of bluntness with this kid.

"You're not understanding me kid. Fourteen is way too young to be thinking you're in love with anybody."

Jane blinked her eyes owlshly, a trick she picked up from the TV no doubt, and shook her head.

"I don't understand what my age has to do with anything. You said being in love was wanting to be with someone all the time for as long as possible, having tingles in my stomach, and wanting to hold hands and kiss. That's how I feel about Mike. That means that I'm in love with Mike."

With a flourish of shaggy curls, she plopped back against the cushions and turned the television back on with a flick of her head.

Hopper stared at her open-mouthed for a moment before shaking his head.

"Nope, not happening. Not on my watch. You're not in love at fourteen years old. You're just not." He watched as El crossed her arms, her regular teenage surliness leaking into her posture again, and rolled her eyes. *That* was getting old quick.

"And how old were you?"

He was taken aback by her question but knew what she was getting at all the same.

"That's beside the point," he hedged.

Again with the damn eye roll.

"No it isn't. You say I'm too young to be in love. How old were you when you first fell in love?" She knew the answer. He'd told her the story before. In any case, his stubborn refusal to answer the question would've been enough of an answer for anyone else. Including the kid. She lifted her chin in a haughty manner, something else he could probably thank the TV for teaching her, or Max, and stood up on the couch so she could meet his eyes.

"Jane," he warned, a warning she ignored as she turned her little puppy dog gaze on him.

"Dad, I'm in love with Mike." He started to argue again but she just laughed and shook her head. As she hopped down from the couch and headed off to her room, she threw back over her shoulder, "and you're being stupid."

Mike released a breath he didn't realize he'd been holding as the car passed the *Leaving Hawkins City Limits* sign. Dating the police chief's daughter meant having the cops on your ass all the damn time. He couldn't sneak a shot of his dad's whiskey without Hopper somehow finding out about it. Making the drive over to Bloomington seemed like the best solution in order to insure that sirens and blue lights didn't interrupt the plans he'd made for El's birthday.

She had scooted over as close to him as possible in the car, a position

she took whenever they were together. Mike had one arm around her shoulders and one on the wheel. When he turned his head, the smell of her shampoo filled his nose and sent his brain into hyper-drive.

His bedsheets smelled the same now. The memory of how that happened made his cheeks warm.

Mike pulled away with a strangled gasp, trying desperately to ignore the way El's chest rose and fell with each quickened breath she took. Her shirt had disappeared the second his bedroom door had shut but the rest of her clothes had remained in tact. She'd managed to unbutton his shirt without him realizing it but, in Mike's defense, his brain had been entirely occupied by her mouth.

"El, we gotta, we gotta stop."

He stood up from the bed, needing distance between their bodies so he could think straight. El sat up when he began refastening the buttons on his shirt. With a twitch of her head, the buttons were undone all over again.

"Mike, we always stop," she pointed out. "What if I want to keep going?" Her words kind of smacked him in the head.

"Do you want to keep going?" To that question, El grabbed his hand and pulled him back down on the bed beside her.

"I've been ready to have sex with you since before I knew what it was. When I found out, it made sense." Suddenly, her voice grew soft. "Unless you don't want to have sex with me. Is that why we always stop?"

"What? El, no! I just, well, it's our first time, you know? I just wanted everything to be special and, and perfect for you." With his stumbled words, the uncertainty on her face melted away. Mike didn't see this however, as his head was hanging down in embarrassment over the total mush he'd just spouted. It wasn't that he hadn't meant what he'd said. He'd just always thought he'd be able to articulate his feelings better when the time came.

He was brought out of his awkwardness when El reached out and placed both hands on his face. When she turned his head to face hers, he barely

had time to register the soft smile her lips had curled into before they were pressed against his own. He'd heard the term 'hungry kiss' before but this was the first time it had ever made sense.

Mike felt his shirt sliding off of his shoulders but El's hands were still on his face. Her powers rarely made her nose bleed anymore so she used them quite often. When she used them to take his clothes off, it was difficult to see a bad side. He pulled back just long enough to help his shirt find the floor. El laid back on the bed, pulling him to follow so he was sprawled on top of her. When she curled a bare leg around his waist and their hips suddenly locked into place with each other, he knew he needed to find the condoms he'd bought months ago in preparation for this moment. Luckily, they were in his nightstand so reaching for them didn't require detaching from El at all.

She sucked her bottom lip between her teeth, waiting more patiently for him to roll the condom on than she had waited the entire time they'd been in his room. Mike met the look of anticipation in her eyes with one of his own. It was impossible not stare at her. Her hair spread haphazardly on his pillow, skirt rucked up above her hips, breathing like she was forcing herself to calm down and it wasn't working. She was perfect.

From the moment he eased himself inside of her and her breath hitched, Mike never wanted to be anywhere else.

"Why can't you just tell me where we're going?"

In the time he'd been reliving the previous night, El had flipped through every radio station she could find without any luck.

"Because it's a surprise. You're supposed to be surprised by your birthday presents." He laughed at the pouty look she gave him but didn't give in.

"I was *already* surprised by my birthday presents...yesterday, on my birthday," she deadpanned. "There was a surprise party and everything. I even got surprise sex last night." Her face flushed at the very wonderful memory. That had been the best present of all, a present she intended to keep unwrapping for as long as Mike would let her.

"Well, despite how much I really want to do that again, sex was not in my original plans for your birthday. Did you really think that shirt was all I got for you?" She looked down at the outline of Han and Leia emblazoned across her chest, their lines of 'I love you' and 'I know' printed above their heads, and laughed.

"But I love this shirt," she pointed out. Mike tried to hold it in but the response jumped out of his mouth before he could stop it.

"I know."

El rolled her eyes and muttered 'dork' under her breath before running a hand through his hair. It had grown out into a mess of shaggy dark curls that she couldn't seem to keep her fingers out of. She knew he kept it long mainly for her. Just another thing on the long list of gifts he didn't even seem to realize he gave her on a daily basis.

"Okay, but can you at least tell me what—," her question was cut off by the sound of Mike laughing.

"El, it's not gonna kill you to wait just a little bit longer." The arm he had around her shoulders pulled her a bit closer. His attempt at placating her worked though and El snuggled deeper into his side.

By the time he parked the car in the secluded spot just off the bank of Lake Monroe, the sun was on its way down. Mike had chosen this spot specifically because the closer you were to the bank, the better view you had of the night sky.

The soft snores he could hear beside him let him know without looking that El had fallen asleep. That was actually perfect since he had a few things to set up before it would be ready for her to see.

As gently as he could, Mike shifted El over on the seat so she was laying down. Luckily, she slept like a log so he figured she'd stay asleep until he physically roused her from her convenient nap. Once he was positive the girl was out like a light, Mike got out of the car and began setting everything up. A few blankets and chairs swiped from the basement, a picnic basket with all of her favorite foods (plenty of Eggos because he's not stupid), and a little camping lantern

so they could have a bit of light. The boombox he'd borrowed from Lucas perched on the hood of the car was the finishing touch. The mixtape he'd made weeks ago was already loaded into the tape deck so all he had to do was press 'play'.

"El?" Nothing. He chuckled at her ability to fall asleep anywhere, something she'd probably picked up wandering the woods of Hawkins, and ran a hand through her hair. The moment his fingertips touched her scalp, a small smile formed on her lips. Her eyes fluttered open like a fucking Disney princess and he found himself falling even deeper for this girl. Guess he found a shovel in the love pit.

"Mike," she mumbled as she turned into his palm. He'd be lying if he said it wasn't the best feeling in the whole world to hear his name on her lips the second she woke up.

"Hey sleepyhead, you hungry?" The mere mention of food and El was wide awake. She sat up in the car so fast she almost bumped foreheads with Mike. He was used to the way she woke up and moved out of the way before they were both nursing headaches. "Easy," he chided playfully. El grabbed his hand so he could help her out of the car and gasped when she saw what he had done.

There on the edge of the water was the blanket fort she'd called home for a week a lifetime ago. He'd built it a bit bigger this time around, most likely to accommodate the both of them, but it was somehow exactly as she remembered. She could smell Eggos (the boys always joked that her ability to smell the toaster waffles from obscene distances was her seventh sense, her powers being the sixth of course) and had a feeling they were in the picnic basket illuminated by a little lantern. Bon Jovi was singing about a runaway on the boombox. It was all just too perfect.

"You did all this, for me?" The amount of arguing and compromising he must have had to go through with her dad just to be able to take her out of Hawkins, and then he topped it with this little lakeside picnic of wonderful. Just for her.

"I mean, it isn't much," he ran a hand through his hair to get it out of his face and shrugged. "I wish I could've done more but Hopper

probably would've killed me if I rented a hotel room and he found out. But I know you like looking at the stars at night and this spot has the clearest view on the lake without getting wet."

El rose up on her tiptoes and pressed her lips to his, unable to keep her smile out of the kiss. She wrapped her arms around his neck to get as close as she could. Nothing would've made her happier than to rip his clothes off again because everyone had failed to tell her that sex was so much fun and she wanted to have as much as she could with Mike! But her dad *had* managed to instill some respect for the law into her and she knew that her ideas were definitely on the illegal end of the spectrum. She settled for losing herself in his mouth, the feel of his tongue mingling with her own, his hands gripping her waist so tight because he was trying to force himself to keep them there instead of letting them explore. She knew that all she had to do was wait a few more seconds and they would be firmly planted on her ass, right where she wanted them. He always made her feel like the most important person in the whole world.

They eventually managed to pull apart long enough for Mike to lead her over to the blanket fort. She squealed a little bit over the little picnic he'd set up. El managed to convince Mike to eat dessert first because she really just wanted the Eggos already. They'd made it about halfway through the lasagna Mike had figured out how to make by himself when the song on the boombox made El jump up.

"Mike, this is our kiss song!" He laughed at the name she'd given 'Every Breath You Take' and stood up with her. He'd been waiting for this song to come up on the tape anyway so her noticing it made it so much better.

He fumbled around in his pocket for the chain he'd put there before he'd picked El up earlier that night.

"El, I wanna give you something." She looked confused when he said that, looking around them at the fort and picnic remains.

"There's more?"

The song playing took him back to the Snow Ball only a few years ago, dancing with El in the middle school gym, and knowing without

a shadow of a doubt that he belonged to her.

"El, I've been in love with you for four years. And I know that we're probably way too young to think about the future. But, if some of the shit we've been through has taught me anything, it's that you can't just wait on the future. Sometimes it feels like the now is all there is. You're the strongest person I've ever known El. Not even because of your powers but because after everything that's been thrown at you, you're still so full of light and love." Mike took the chain out of his pocket, grateful that it hadn't tangled up into a metal mess, and held it out to her. The ring dangled between them.

"Your class ring," she whispered. "But those are important, aren't they?"

"You're way more important El. I want you have it because it's my promise to you that you'll never lose me. I'll always be right here." Mike placed his hand on her chest, feeling the beat of her heart beneath his palm.

She blinked up at him for few seconds before taking the chain with his ring and slipping it over her own head. El then put her hand on his chest, loving the unsteady thrum his own heart beat against her fingers. He was so nervous.

"And I promise that you'll never lose me Mike. You're my home, my now *and* my future. I promise that I will never *not* be right here." She tapped her fingers along with the drumming his heart was doing to let him know that she was his just as much as he was hers.

Mike closed the small gap left between them by wrapping his arms around her and pulling her close. El rested her head on his chest without hesitation. It felt like her heart might explode from being too happy. Was that a thing? Hearts exploding couldn't be good, but this didn't feel like it was bad. It felt like every good thing there was in the whole world was wrapped up in Mike's arms, like she was surrounded by air and light and just, *good*.

"Um, El?" The worried edge in Mike's voice made her open her eyes.

"What's wrong?" She noticed that he was holding her just a little

tighter than before, not that she was complaining.

"Could you, maybe, you know, put us down?"

El looked down only to find that the ground was now a few more inches below them than it had been a few minutes ago. She was pretty sure that this was the first time she'd ever made a person float without actually trying to do so, not counting that one time she closed the gate.

"Uh, let's see," she grinned up at him. El envisioned them both touching feet to the dirt once again and then felt it happen. Mike took a deep breath that made her giggle.

"What was *that*?" His question carried the same amount of awe that it generally did when he addressed her powers but there was something else she couldn't name.

"Um, happy levitating," she threw out a guess. As Mike shook his head at her, El figured out what it was she couldn't name.

Loving exasperation.

"Come here you happy, perfect girl."

"Max, can you help me again?" El had sat down at the vanity in her dressing room to try and fix her veil only to end up with her bracelet stuck in the delicate lace, *again*. Considering that the veil was her 'something borrowed', from Mike's mom no less, she really didn't want anything to happen to it. Her bracelet didn't seem to feel the same way since this was the third time her Maid of Honor was having to save her veil.

"You might want to just take the bracelet off, El." The redhead receiving a somewhat withering look from the bride and just resigned herself to Veil Safety Duty for the rest of the night. She knew the little blue corded bracelet had been a gift from Hopper but its clasp was trying its damndest to destroy the veil. With only minutes to go before El was supposed to be walking down the aisle, she didn't have time argue the oddities of the 'something blue' trying to kill the 'something borrowed'.

Right as she pulled the metal free, a knock sounded at the door. The girls recognized it as the not-so-secret knock from their youth. Max went to the door, expecting to see Hopper there to take them downstairs to the banquet hall where the ceremony was taking place. Instead, she was greeted by the stupidly grinning face of Mike Wheeler.

She promptly shut the door in his stupid grinning face.

"Go away Mike, you can't see El before the wedding." She spoke loud enough that he could hear her through the door but heard only a repeat of the secret knock in response. "I'm not opening the door again nerd. Go wait for her at the end of the aisle like a good little groom." A hand touched her shoulder and Max turned to see El standing there giggling.

"It's okay Max, he can come in." Max's eyes went wide.

"No he can't," she stage whispered. "It's bad luck for the groom to see the bride before the wedding." She knew El and Mike never seemed to care about rules very much but, damn it, they were going to follow this one.

"What if I close my eyes," came Mike's voice through the door. Max huffed at the loophole he seemed to have found and decided right then and there that when Lucas finally popped the question, they were following all the wedding rules no matter what.

"I'm not going to be party to this," she laughed finally. Quickly she kissed El on the cheek and grabbed her bouquet before opening the door again. "Shut those eyes then lover boy, I'll see you downstairs."

True to his word, Mike kept his eyes closed as he stepped into the room. El laughed as he staggered but took his outstretched hand and pulled him to her.

"What are you doing here Mike?" The question had barely left her lips before he'd leaned down and caught them in a kiss. By the time they pulled apart, the room felt about fifteen degrees warmer than before.

"You're about to become Jane Eleanor Wheeler, the woman I'm going

to spend the rest of my life with. I just wanted to kiss Jane Eleanor Hopper one last time."

How could eyelids convey emotion? Even closed, El felt like she was looking right into the windows of his soul. She didn't know how he managed to do it but was happy she had their entire future together to figure it out. El dug her fingers into his hair and tugged him back down to crash her lips to his.

Max was right. He was a nerd.

But he was *her* nerd. And she was his.

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So, don't keep me in suspense. Let me know what you think of it! I still respond to my reviews so feel free to leave your thoughts and comments. Thank you!